

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A microswitch comprising:
 - a deformable membrane comprising at least two flexure arms and at least one contact arm arranged completely between the two flexure arms, the arms being substantially parallel to each other in a first stable position, the membrane being physically attached to a substrate by means of the flexure arms by at least one of the ends of each flexure arm,
 - the flexure arms comprising actuating means designed to deform the flexure arms, from the first stable position of the microswitch to a second stable position in such a way as to establish in the second stable position an electric contact between at least a first conducting pad formed on the substrate and at least a second conducting pad arranged on the contact arm, in a second stable position, the actuating means being disposed adjacent to the substrate on at least one of the ends of each flexure arm, the ends having the actuating means being on opposite sides of the contact arm,
 - the contact arm being directly attached to each of said flexure arms in high deformation areas of said flexure arms, the contact arm remaining substantially parallel to the substrate and deforming less than the flexure arms upon actuation of the microswitch,
 - and complementary electrostatic holding means respectively fixedly secured to the ~~membrane~~ contact arm and to the substrate and designed to hold the microswitch in the second stable position of the membrane.
2. (Previously Presented) The microswitch according to claim 1, wherein the contact arm supporting the electrostatic holding means is elongate.
3. (Previously Presented) The microswitch according to claim 1, wherein the two ends of the flexure arms are fixedly secured to the substrate, the contact arm being

attached, via a central part thereof, to the flexure arms at the level of their respective central parts.

4. (Previously Presented) The microswitch according to claim 1, wherein each flexure arm comprises a first end fixedly secured to the substrate and a second end fixedly secured to the contact arm, the second ends of the two adjacent flexure arms being respectively fixedly secured to opposite ends of the corresponding contact arm.

5. (Previously Presented) The microswitch according to claim 1, wherein the actuating means of the microswitch comprise a thermal actuator.

6. (Previously Presented) The microswitch according to claim 5, wherein the thermal actuator comprises a heating resistor inserted in at least one end of the flexure arms.

7. (Previously Presented) The microswitch according to claim 1, wherein the actuating means of the microswitch comprise a piezoelectric actuator.

8. (Previously Presented) The microswitch according to claim 1, wherein the flexure arms are bimetal strips.

9. (Previously Presented) The microswitch according to claim 1, wherein the electrostatic holding means of the membrane comprise at least one electrode.

10. (Previously Presented) The microswitch according to claim 1, the electrostatic holding means being at least attached to the contact arm.

11. (New) A microswitch comprising a deformable membrane, the microswitch comprising:

at least two flexure arms, each comprising two opposite ends, each end being directly attached to a substrate,

at least one contact arm arranged between the at least two flexure arms, the contact arm being independently and directly attached to each of said flexure arms in a central

part of said flexure arms, the contact arm remaining substantially parallel to the substrate and deforming less than the at least two flexure arms upon actuation of the microswitch,

the at least two flexure arms and the contact arm being substantially parallel to each other in a first stable position,

the flexure arm comprising actuating means disposed adjacent to the substrate designed to deform the flexure arms, from the first stable position of the microswitch to a second stable position in such a way to establish in the second stable position an electric contact between at least a first conducting pad formed on the substrate and at least a second conducting pad arranged on the contact arm, and

complementary electrostatic holding means respectively fixedly secured to the membrane and the substrate and designed to hold the microswitch in the second stable position of the membrane.

12. (New) A microswitch comprising a deformable membrane, the microswitch comprising:

at least first and second substantially parallel flexure arms, each comprising a first end and a second end, said first ends facing each other and said second ends facing each other, the first end of the first flexure arm and the second end of the second flexure arm being directly attached to a substrate,

at least one contact arm arranged between the first and second flexure arms, the contact arm being independently and directly attached to the second end of the first flexure arm and to the first end of the second flexure arm, the contact arm remaining substantially parallel to the substrate and deforming less than the first and second flexure arms upon actuation of the microswitch,

the flexure arms and the contact arm being substantially parallel to each other in a first stable position,

the flexure arms comprising actuating means disposed adjacent to the substrate designed to deform the flexure arms, from the first stable position of the microswitch to a second stable position in such a way to establish in the second stable position an electric contact between at least a first conducting pad formed on the substrate and at least a second conducting pad arranged on the contact arm, and

complementary electrostatic holding means respectively fixedly secured to the membrane and to the substrate and designed to hold the microswitch in the second stable position of the membrane.